

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 03890 221102Z

12

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 DODE-00 AF-10 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20

RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 MC-02

ACDA-19 DRC-01 /117 W

----- 123787

R 211810Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5926

INFO USCINCEUR

S E C R E T TUNIS 3890

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS TS

SUBJECT: CHIEF OF MISSION SUMMARY STATEMENT FY 1975

SECURITY ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 31505; TUNIS 3701

1. THE LONG HISTORY OF AMERICAN ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA HAS EMPHASIZED FOR TUNISIANS THE REALITY OF OUR FRIENDSHIP FOR THEM AND OUR INTEREST IN THE STABILITY AND WELFARE OF THEIR COUNTRY. THE LEVEL OF OUR ASSISTANCE HAS RECENTLY DECLINED GREATLY, NOT ONLY IN LINE WITH THE REDUCED AVAILABILITY OF OUR RESOURCES WORLDWIDE BUT ALSO CONSONANT WITH TUNISIA'S ENHANCED CAPABILITY TO BEAR HER OWN FINANCIAL BURDENS. THIS IS AS IT SHOULD BE, BUT WE SHOULD BE WARY OF ADVERSE TUNISIAN POLITICAL REACTIONS. I BELIEVE THE LEVEL OF OUR PROGRAMS HAS NOW BEEN REDUCED TO THE POINT AT WHICH WE RISK DESTRUCTION OF THE RESERVOIR OF GOOD WILL AND THE GENUINE POLITICAL LEVERAGE WE HAVE IN TUNISIA IF WE ATTEMPT FURTHER CUTS.

2. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MULTI-HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR ASSISTANCE PLANNED FOR EGYPT AND OTHER MIDDLE EAST NATIONS HAS WEAKENED THE POLITICAL IMPACT HERE OF OUR MODEST

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 03890 221102Z

SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. IN TUNISIAN EYES, OUR

REDUCED ABILITY TO CONTINUE ASSISTANCE TO THEM IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND IN VIEW OF THE FAR LARGER SUMS WE ARE NOT PREPARING TO PROVIDE TO GOVERNMENTS, SOME OF WHICH HAVE NOT SHOWN THE STAUNCH FRIENDSHIP WHICH TUNISIA HAS MAINTAINED. THIS HAS GIVEN RISE--ALONG WITH OTHER FACTORS, TO BE SURE--TO A TENDENCY AMONG TUNISIANS TO THINK WE VALUE OUR INTERESTS HERE LESS HIGHLY THAN WE ONCE DID. THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA HAS NEVER FAVORED THE CONCEPT OF A POWERFUL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. INSTEAD IT HAS CONSISTENTLY LOOKED TO STRONG POLITICAL TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND, INCREASINGLY NOW, WITH FRANCE TO SUPPLY AN ASSURANCE TO TUNISIAN INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE. RESPONSIBLE TUNISIANS UNDERSTAND THE LIMITATIONS ON OUR RESOURCES, AND AGREE WITH THE NEED FOR HEAVY AID INPUTS TO THE PRINCIPALS IN THE ARAB-ISTAEEL CONFLICT, BUT IT IS NEVERTHELESS INEVITABLE THAT THEY WILL PLACE AN UNFORTUNATE POLITICAL INTERPRETATION ON OUR REDUCTION OF AID, CONSTRUING IT AS AN AMERICAN STEP TOWARD DISENGAGEMENT FROM TUNISIA.

3. THE RECENT INCIDENT IN WHICH TUNISIAN OFFICIALS MISUNDERSTOOD AN OFFER OF FMS CREDIT UNDERSCORES MY CONCERN. IN THIS INSTANCE WE WERE ABLE TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT AND AT LEAST IN PART ASSURE THE TUNISIANS OF OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE BEING HELPFUL, BUT BEFORE THIS WAS DONE THE MATTER HAD BEEN INTERPRETED BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CAUSE A "STRAIN".

4. THE TERMINATION OF MAP GRAN ASSISTANCE AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH FMS CREDIT IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL HRUDLE THE TUNISIANS ARE NOW TAKING. ENDING THE MAP GRANT MATERIEL PROGRAM BEFORE THE END OF FY 1975 WOULD BE SURE TO CONVEY TO TUNISIAN LEADERS THE NOTION THAT WE HAD CHANGED COURSE ABRUPTLY. WE AN HOWEVER, I BELIEVE, EDUCATE THE TUNISIANS BY FY 76 TO ACCEPT THE CREDIT CONCEPT IN LIEU OF GRANT AID WITH NO SERIOUS POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS. AS THE TUNIANS RECENT REVERSAL OF THEIR DECISION TO REJECT OUR FY 74 CREDIT OFFER INDICATES, THEY PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON THEIR MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH US AND THEY WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. UNDER PRESENT TUNISIAN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 03890 221102Z

RE-EQUIPMENT PLANS, THEY WILL CONTINUE TO NEED SUCH CREDIT, AND WE SHALL WANT TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE IT BOTH FOR ITS REASSURING POLICAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE AND TO SUPPORT OUR DEVELOPING MILITARY SALES POTENTIAL. ACCORDINGLY, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM MAP GRANT BY WAY OF CREIT OFFERED ON THE MOST CONCESSIONARY TERMS POSSIBLE, RECOGNIZING THAT THE VOLUME WILL IN ANY CASE BE SLIGHT AND THE ASSOCIATED

BENEFITS FOR US RELATIVELY GREAT. MAP TRAINING GRANTS SHOULD BE CONTINUED, O BOTH AS A MEAN OF CONTINUED ACCESS TO THE TUNISIAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND AS REINSURANCE OF PRO-AMERICAN ORIENTATION WITHIN THE CAREER MILITARY HERE.

5. WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA IN OFFICE, I BELIEVE THAT CAREFUL, PERSONAL DIPLOMACY WITH HIM WOULD PRESERVE THE FABRIC OF WHAT HE VIEWS AS A LONG AND SPECIAL, MORE THAN FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES, EVEN IF WE CHOSE TO TERMINATE AID ALTOGETHER. LOOKING BEYOND HIS DAYS AS PRESIDENT, HOWEVER, WE WILL PROBABLY FACE A TUNISIAN LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS A LESS PERSONAL, LESS SENTIMENTAL VIEW OF THE AMERICAN CONNECTION.

WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO DISMANTLE NOW THE ALREADY VERY MODEST MACHINERY OF ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA WHICH COULD PROVE USEFUL IN ASSURING PRESERVATION OF OUR POLITICAL, STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC ASSETS HERE UNDER THAT NEW LEADERSHIP.

SEELYE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, MILITARY POLICIES, MILITARY CREDIT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TUNIS03890
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740164-0799
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740622/aaaaasvc.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 31505; TUNIS 3701
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 AUG 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <14 FEB 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHIEF OF MISSION SUMMARY STATEMENT FY 1975 SECURITY ASSISTANCE
TAGS: MASS, TS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005